CLEMSON UNIVERSITY

Cotton/Soybean Insect Newsletter

Volume 6, Issue #14 **Edisto Research & Education Center in Blackville, SC** **4 August 2011**

Pest Patrol Hotline

If you do not have access to this newsletter but want the information contained herein each week, there is a toll-free hotline for insect problems updated here. I will update the short message weekly for at least as long as the newsletter runs. Call the free number **(877) 285-8525** and select the messages you would like to hear. Select #3 for the Southeast, and select #1 to hear my message. The hotline is sponsored by Syngenta.

News from Above the Lakes

Randy Cubbage, county agent covering Lee, Kershaw, and Sumter Counties, reported late last week that he had one soybean field treated (with Belt insecticide) this past week in Lee County with 10 beet armyworms (BAW) per foot (that averaged ¼ inch). Control was good with Belt. He also reported that scouts were finding some BAW in other soybean fields in higher numbers but that defoliation was limited at the time. Randy also stated that some BAW were found in cotton in blooms but not at high numbers. He reported that he was finding more kudzu bugs in new soybean fields this week, and egg masses are hatching and easy to find – some on top of leaves and some under leaves, but currently adult numbers are low.

News from Below the Lakes

No news to report this week. Email to me your observations for the newsletter by Wednesday of each week.

News from the Piedmont/Upstate

No news to report this week. Email to me your observations for the newsletter by Wednesday of each week.

Cotton Situation

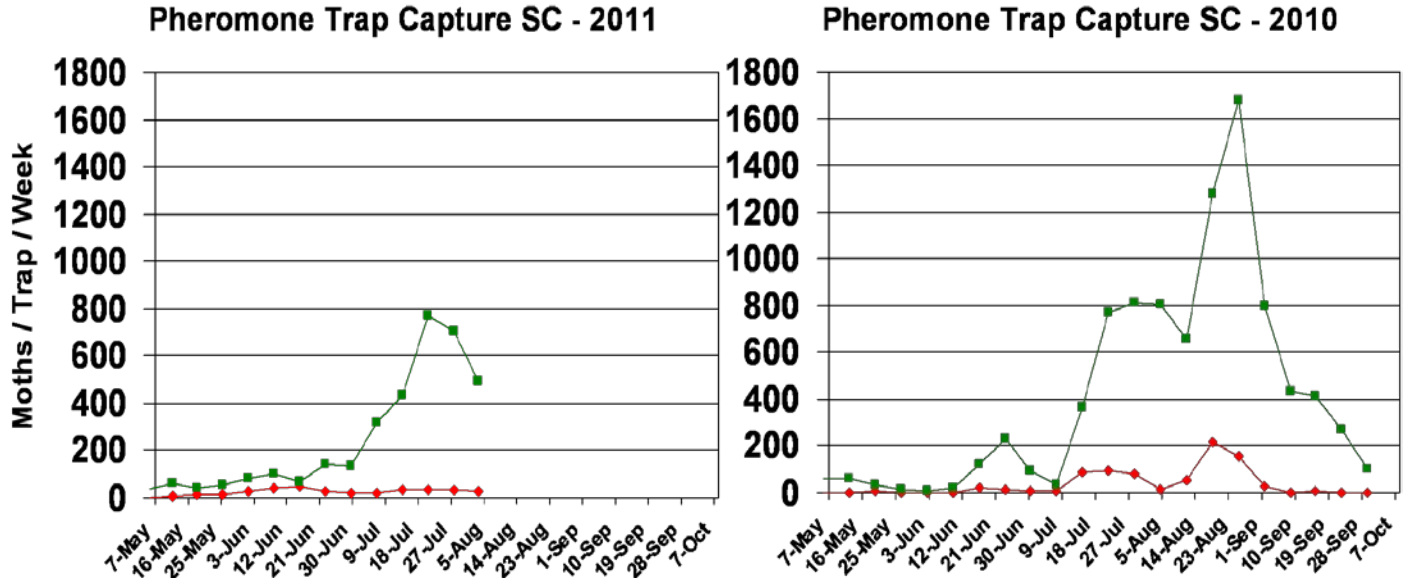
As of 1 August 2011, the USDA NASS South Carolina Statistical Office had our progress at about 91% of the crop as squaring, compared with 95% last year at this time and 93% for the 5-yr average. About 59% of the crop has set bolls, compared with 49% last year at this time and 48% for the 5-yr average. Temperatures have remained high, and we need more rainfall to finish out this crop. The overall soil moisture levels in the state were described as 27% very short, 50% short, and 23% adequate, with no surplus. Conditions for cotton were reported as 6% very poor, 16% poor, 44% fair, 33% good and 1% excellent. These are observed/perceived state-wide averages.

Stink Bugs, Aphids, etc.

Populations of stink bugs continue to be variable in most cotton fields, but I have noticed that some of our late-planted cotton has higher numbers of stink bugs. Continue to watch those fields for building populations of stink bugs. We could experience more problems with stink bugs in those late fields. Most of what I am seeing in the field is green stink bug with a few brown stink bugs, so the pyrethroids should do a fine job and help with any escaped bollworm. I have seen very few southern green stink bugs this season. Aphids continue to linger in some fields, despite widespread occurrence of the naturally occurring beneficial fungus. Some folks have decided to clean those up as they go across the field for stink bugs, reducing the stress factors (that we can) on the crop. We certainly have experienced plenty of heat and drought stress this season.

Bollworm & Tobacco Budworm

Captures of bollworm (BW) and tobacco budworm (TBW) moths in pheromone traps at EREC last season and this season are shown below. Numbers are similar so far but a little lower than last year. Observations in corn this season have indicated that numbers should be lower in cotton this year. We caught almost 5,000 BW moths in 10 traps last week. I expect that we could see an increase in BW capture within the next couple of weeks – we will just have to see what happens. Damage in our non-Bt plots is high, but I can tell that pressure is lower than last year. Tobacco budworm continues to be important for our soybean acres and for a limited number of non-Bt-cotton acres. I provide these data as a measure of moth activity in our local area where I use these data as an indication of moth presence and activity near my research plots. The numbers are not necessarily representative of the species throughout the state.



Cotton Insect Control Guide

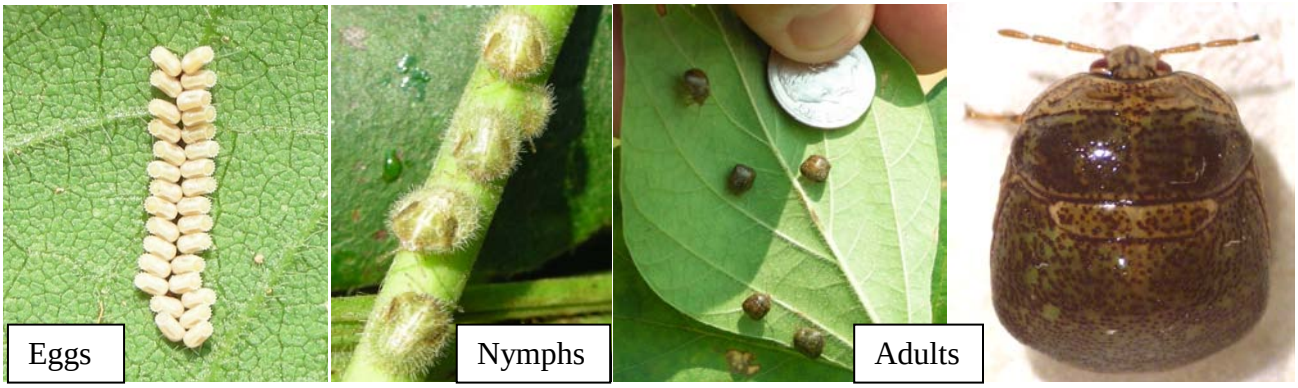
Clemson University Publication IC97 (Cotton Insect Management) has been revised for 2011 and is available free from your local county office. It is also available online at:
http://www.clemson.edu/psapublishing/pages/ENTOM/IC97.PDF

Soybean Situation

As of 1 August 2011, the USDA NASS South Carolina Statistical Office had our progress at 60% of soybeans as blooming, slightly ahead of where we were last year at 58% and the 5-yr average of 52%. About 11% of pods have been set, compared with 23% last year and 20% for the 5-yr average. Conditions for soybeans were reported as 12% very poor, 29% poor, 41% fair, 18% good and 0% excellent. These are observed/perceived state-wide averages.

Kudzu Bug/Bean Plataspid

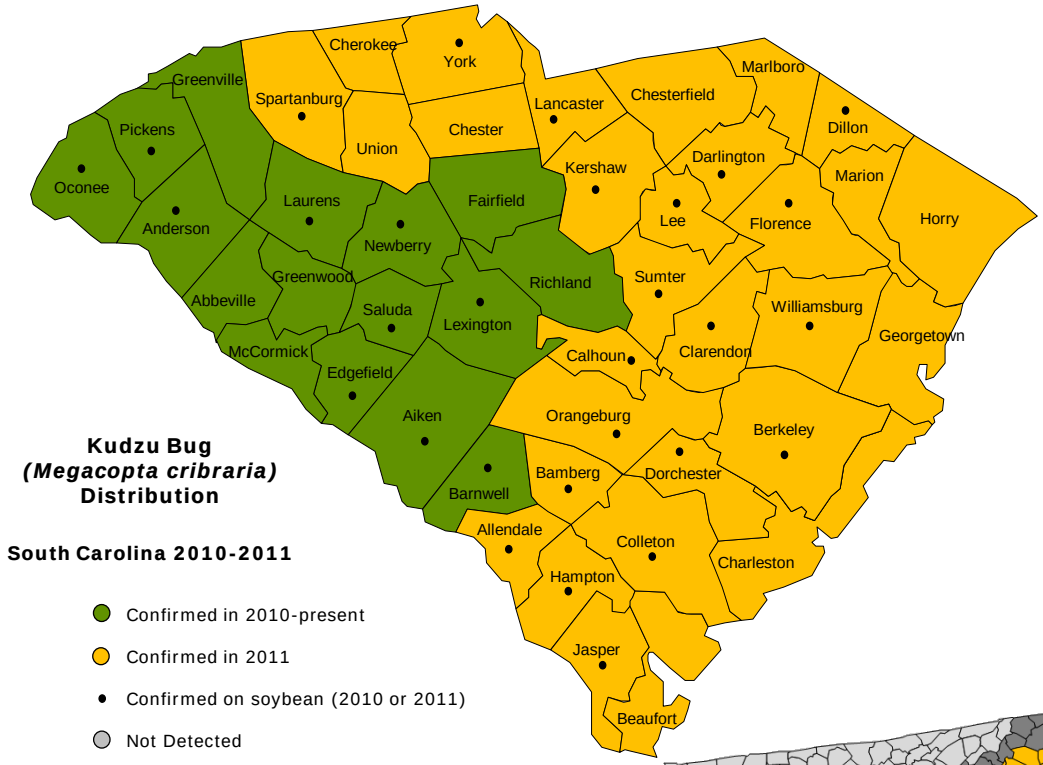
The kudzu bug (a.k.a. bean plataspid), *Megacopta cribraria*, is NOW IN EVERY COUNTY IN SC. It continues to spread in the Southeast. ***It has been found on kudzu, wisteria, lima beans, soybeans and other leguminous hosts.*** Please continue to inform me if they are observed in any crops, particularly soybeans. ***Please email me with reports in all counties not reporting them in soybeans previously – see map below.***

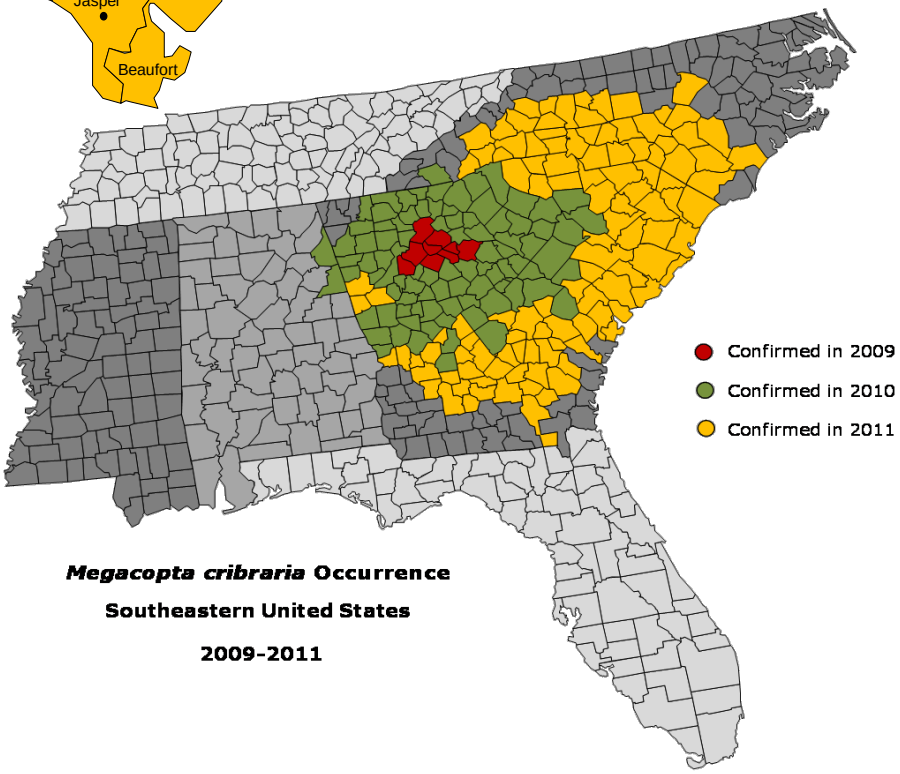


Kudzu bugs/bean plataspids continue to move into soybeans. Be on the lookout for adults, eggs, and hatching immatures. Although UGA is suggesting a treatment threshold of 3-5 bugs/plant, I am not recommending dedicated applications of insecticide for this insect at this point, unless the infestation is "excessive, building, and includes immatures (many eggs and nymphs)". My recommendation is that we need to find another reason to go across the field and tank mix insecticide in for building infestations of kudzu bug. For example, if boron is going out, and the producer is going across the field, consider adding an insecticide effective on stink bugs to control kudzu bug if they are at high numbers. We do not have good data on thresholds yet. At this point, we are still learning about this insect. Again, it takes years to develop tools such as treatment thresholds for insect pests.

The latest known distribution of the kudzu bug in SC is represented below (the maps have not changed from last week). **We have it confirmed in every county in SC**. We are now documenting the presence of the species

on soybeans (counties with dots below). Some were observed in soybeans last year, and many more have been observed in the crop this season. A map of the infested portions of the southeastern USA is also shown.





Southeast map courtesy of Dr. Wayne Gardner (UGA).

Soybean Insect Control Guide

Clemson University Publication SL1 (Soybean Insect Management) has been revised for 2011 and is available free from your local county office. It is also available online at:
http://www.clemson.edu/psapublishing/pages/AGRO/SL1.PDF

Pest Management Handbook - 2011

Insect control recommendations are also available online in the 2011 Pest Management Handbook at:
http://www.clemson.edu/extension/rowcrops/pest/index.html

Need More Information?

Log on to the following web pages to view important cotton management recommendations, data, and historical cotton/soybean insect newsletters:

For more cotton and soybean information:
http://www.clemson.edu/public/rec/edisto/research/index.html

For past newsletters:
http://www.clemson.edu/extension/rowcrops/cotton/pest_management/newsletters/index.html

Sincerely,

Jeremy K. Greene, Ph.D.
Associate Professor – Entomologist

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